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dem Spiero sagt, dass er "wie kein anderer neuerer Dichter geschaffen und berufen sei, sein Volk noch in weite künftige Geschicke hineinzuleiten".

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DR. KURT REICHELT, *RICHARD WAGNER UND DIE ENGLISCHE LITERATUR*. Leipzig, 1912. Xenien Verlag. 8°, 179pp.

Since the publication of Muncker's admirable biographical sketch in 1891, there has been an ever-increasing tendency to treat Wagner from the literary-historical standpoint. Numerous valuable and sane contributions to Wagner literature have been made by the "Literarhistoriker" Golther and Koch; among these, Volume I of Koch's Wagner biography is especially to be commended for its presentation of Wagner in connection with contemporaneous literary and cultural movements. On the whole, these studies have been of a more general character, not based on close, literary-historical or philological investigation of a narrowly circumscribed theme. Lately, however, especially under the direction of Golther and Koch, monographs have been appearing which aim to treat Wagner's relationship to various literatures or individuals in accordance with the objective methods of modern research. The day of blind fury in attack and of equally blind adulation in defence and propaganda is fortunately past—or nearly past. Wagner has become an historical character. In place of the countless subjectively colored books on the Bayreuth master which poured forth uninterruptedly into the glutted market, we may, in the future, hope for less production but more objective treatment.

Subjects such as "Wagner and the Greek drama"; "Wagner and E. T. A. Hoffmann", "Wagner and English Literature" are typical of what may be expected in the more serious discussion of Wagner as undertaken by the literary-historian. The obvious inadequacy of all such investigation lies in the fact that no comprehensive treatment of the musician Wagner is attempted. Without his music, Wagner is but half the man, perhaps less than half. In the unprecedented combination of dramatist and musician, the creator of 'Tristan' and the 'Mastersingers' is surely worthy of being classed with the greatest geniuses of German history. Without his music to complete the expression of his dramatic works, Wagner would not rank with a Goethe or a Schiller. The literary-historian,

dealing only with Wagner's literary production, yet realizing that he is dealing with a supreme genius, is prone to forget that this lofty position of his hero is not due to his poetry alone, and is easily led to exaggerate the value of Wagner's poetical output. The influences of Greek tragedy, of Hoffmann, of English literature were, to be sure, potent in the stimulation of Wagner's musical as well as his literary genius, but the real, the whole Wagner cannot be explained by showing the indebtedness of passages on the printed page to earlier literature or even by demonstrating the remarkable dramatic structure of a *Tannhäuser* as compared with its unconnected sources. Nevertheless such investigations are indispensable in determining the genesis and development of the various works and are helpful contributions to the complete understanding of the tone-dramatist Wagner.

In his monograph on "*Richard Wagner und die englische Literatur*", an expansion of his Breslau dissertation, Reichelt attempts to trace Wagner's acquaintanceship with English literature from his early youth, "when he learned English in order to read Shakespeare", to his old age, to discuss Wagner's attitude at different periods of his life towards England's greatest dramatist, and to show the nature of Wagner's art by comparing his works with their English sources.

Chapter I, the most interesting of the seven, gives an admirable short general survey of Wagner's acquaintanceship with English literature, largely based on Wagner's own accounts. Here, to be sure, Reichelt occasionally attempts to deduce too much from a simple statement. Like most great Germans, Wagner, too, went to school to Shakespeare, and wrote in his autobiography that he had "made a metrical translation of Romeo's monolog". From this statement, Reichelt infers that the boy Richard made use of one of the prose translations rather than the Schlegel-Tieck translations which he certainly used later. Or "was it possible that in boyish arrogance, self-confidence and bold creative fervor, he believed himself capable of a more perfect metrical translation"? Neither of these alternatives is called for. Like any young fellow of literary bent, Richard admired the passage and thought he would try his hand at it.

Chapter II discusses Wagner's relationship to Shakespeare. Throughout his life Wagner considered Shakespeare "the mightiest poet of all time" and in every new stage of his own development he felt bound to propound and answer the question as to what position he should assume in reference to the personality and genius of the English dramatist. Being artist rather than philosopher, Wagner was prone to err in his theo-

ries, if not in his productive work, and his explanations of Shakespeare's genius are interesting rather than valid. Reichelt justly criticizes Wagner's contention that Shakespeare's genius is to be explained only or chiefly from his talent as an improvising mime, and that his drama has remained free from any influence of "der antikisierenden Renaissance". On the other hand Wagner was right in demanding that Shakespeare be judged only by his own measuring rod and not by that of ancient tragedy, while not in the least assuming that Shakespeare himself should be the model for slavish imitation throughout all future time. Faulty again is Wagner's theory that the drama originated in the novel. According to Reichelt, Wagner's study of Shakespeare may be divided into two periods; the first 1849-1851, in which Wagner was occupied with the question as to the origin of the Shakespearean drama; the second, about twenty years later, when he was attempting to define its character. In neither of these periods are Wagner's conclusions wholly reliable.

In the two following chapters detailed comparisons of Wagner's 'Liebesverbot' with Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure' and Wagner's 'Rienzi' with Bulwer's novel are given. Reichelt rightly emphasizes the fact that the 'Liebesverbot', which Wagnerites are prone to pass over lightly, is just as necessary in Wagner's development as "die Räuber" in that of Schiller. The treatment of 'Rienzi', while comprehensive, is not altogether satisfactory. As Golther suggests in his review, D. Lit. Ztg. Oct. 12, 1912, Reichelt might well have profited by a study of Reuss's excellent article on Rienzi in the Bayreuther Blätter, Vol. XII, p. 150.

The concluding chapters on "English influences in 'Leubald', 'Hochzeit', 'Feen', und 'Holländer', on "Second Sight", and on "Wagner and Thomas Carlyle" are short, fragmentary and unconvincing. On the whole, Reichelt's monograph contains much valuable material and is an interesting contribution to Wagner literature; nevertheless it can hardly be considered the last word on the subject and leaves the impression that the author was not yet fully master of his theme or fully acquainted with the literature. A number of minor errors in the orthography or use of English words and names indicate also that Reichelt was not fully conversant with the language. Yet in his chapter on Rienzi he cites regularly the English edition, although Wagner himself made use of Bärmann's translation. An alphabetically arranged bibliography and an index would have been welcome additions to Reichelt's monograph.

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